
When abroad, the one thing I make sure I do before leaving a place is visit a local market. Going deep into the bowels, so to speak, of where food is bought and sold by people living out their daily lives provides an immediate glimpse into their worldview. Ask a few questions, and you’ll quickly learn a new way to cook something or maybe gain a new perspective on global trade. Almost always, you’ll receive a warm smile that you can carry with you throughout the rest of the day.

Our project in Costa Rica is a special one. In a nutshell, we get to work with farmers who own small plots of land in developing the market-ability of their products and their business savvy, with the end result being improved livelihoods. Seriously, how cool is that?!

You’re right, we do that in Indiana, and that’s equally as cool. I agree. Taking that knowledge, adapting it, reworking it, and applying it elsewhere, in a setting that isn’t all that familiar to you, well, that could be cooler than the other two “cools” just mentioned!

A new program that brings a curriculum to Extension focusing on what people in other countries eat? That’s cool.

The continued success of plastics bags for storing beans and increasing W. African farmers’ food security and income? Very cool.

Young people from Indiana, Poland and Japan sitting around a table and talking 4-H? Come on, you know that’s cool.

How much cooler could International Extension at Purdue be? Where’s the next cool project? Let’s find out!

Farmer to Farmer in Costa Rica

Nine Purdue Extension Educators have been selected to facilitate a USAID Farmer-to-Farmer project with a 250 family member farmer’s association in Turrialba, Costa Rica. Three teams of three Educators, along with Jim Murren, Purdue International Extension Coordinator, will collaborate with CATIE, a tropical agriculture research institute, in developing training workshops that will focus on increasing the association’s business capacity.

Tamara Benjamin, a Purdue Research Scientist stationed at CATIE, along with Elecer Vargas, will lead the planning efforts on the ground in Turrialba.

The Extension Educators will travel to CATIE for 2 weeks at a time. The Educators going from March 13-26 are: J. W. Fansler, Scott Monroe, and Ed Farris. Those going from August 14-27 are: Carmen DeRusha, Amy Thompson, and Stacy Clupper. The October 9-22 group consists of Kris Parker, Bill Horan, and Margie Zoglmann.

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Budget Uncertainty and Int’l Extension

Jess Lowenberg-DeBoer and Chuck Hibberd

International Extension in a Time of Budget Uncertainty

We live in a time of great uncertainty. The state of Indiana is proposing major budget cuts for almost all state activities, including Extension. The Federal budget process is in chaos. Worldwide the economy is shaky. Conflicts drag on in Afghanistan and Iraq. The impulse is to hunker down, focus on immediate needs and try to weather the storm. I think we need to fight off that impulse and try to help Indiana prepare for a future in which demand growth if focused in the newly industrialized countries (e.g. Brazil, China, India) and the still developing countries. To respond to that opportunity Hoosiers need to understand those markets and have the linkages that allow them to serve those markets. The Farmer-to-Farmer project with the Association of Organic Producers of Turrialba, Costa Rica is exactly such a project. In addition to helping the Turriabla growers build their skills, it will help a Purdue Extension understand Latin American markets and challenges. While we are responding to the daily challenges at home, we need to take a little time to prepare for the international challenges of tomorrow.

J. Lowenberg-DeBoer, Associate Dean and Director, International Programs in Agriculture, Purdue University

PEGAT’s Hungry Planet Initiative

This project will bring the content and strategies created by the “Hungry Planet” materials to communities in the State of Indiana. The purpose of this strategy is to create awareness about our globalized world among people who have not had the opportunity to travel abroad or establish personal relationships with foreigners. Using the theme of food we will introduce the participants to families from 12 different countries. Statewide strategies for Hungry Planet educational presentations at community events and gatherings as well as in K-12 schools are:

1. Conduct an introductory session for Extension Educators by webinar (to be archived for on demand presentations)

2. Conduct an introductory session for Extension Educators to host by webinar for teachers (to be archived for on demand presentations)

3. Create a traveling mounted poster displays with Hungry Planet Posters and a introductory poster with the Indiana Humanities FOOD for THOUGHT poster initiative including the logo and description. Extension Educators will provide the footwork necessary to get this display carried and presented throughout the state to appropriate events and programs.


To learn more about this new initiative, join the PEGAT team for Extension’s 3rd Thursday webinar on February 17.

(PEGAT is Purdue Extension Global Awareness Team)
PICS Making Progress
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http://www.ag.purdue.edu/ipia/pics/Pages/home.aspx

The Purdue Improved Cowpea Storage (PICS) Project continues its efforts to make the triple-layer plastic bags available for non-chemical cowpea storage in West and Central Africa. Since the launch of the project in 2007 to June 2010, PICS extension activities reached more than 24,000 villages in Nigeria, Niger, Burkina Faso, Mali, Togo and Benin. In June 2010, PICS entered its fourth year with the launch of training and village activities in the new countries that include Ghana, Cameroon, Senegal and Chad. PICS project is planning to reach more than 5,000 villages in its fourth year.

PICS efforts continue in these countries to support the development of the supply chain so that PICS bags are available to farmers through local shops and markets. The PICS project is working with manufacturers to produce good quality bags. African entrepreneurs are finding new business opportunities in purchasing the PICS bags from manufacturer and selling them to farmers through their retail networks. Farmers and cowpea consumers are enjoying the benefits of Purdue and partners’ research and development efforts. Farmers and traders have an economic motive for storage because cowpea prices often double or triple from harvest time lows to seasonal highs in the months before the next harvest. For the past three years more than 1,200,000 PICS bags have been sold in the region.

Radio continues to play an important role in building awareness regarding the PICS technology. TV and print media (posters, etc) are also used to increase awareness about the technology. In addition, PICS is innovating outreach activities in rural Africa by taking advantage of the use of cell phones with Bluetooth to communicate hermetic storage skills to farmers. PICS cell phone videos are proving to be useful because hermetic sealing is difficult to describe in words on the radio or in print. PICS project has developed cell phone videos in English, French and local languages. Culturally and linguistically appropriate cell phone videos present potential as a new tool for conveying visual and oral messages on cowpea storage technology in rural Africa. More on the PICS cell phone videos:


Paper: Cell Phone Video for Communicating Hermetic Cowpea Storage Skills
Clinton Co Annual Dinner highlights Indiana Global 4-H Programs participants

On a snowy January 27th, over 100 residents of Clinton County gathered at the 4-H fairgrounds for their annual dinner. Clinton County had plenty to highlight around global 4-H. In 2010, they had (14) 4-H participants travel to the Heifer Ranch global learning camp in Perryville, AR. Additionally, Clinton County had a 4-H family who hosted a Japanese teen through the 4-H Japan program. 4-Her’s who participated in both aforementioned programs took time to explain to the audience just what the programs meant to them, how the experience positively changed them, and new goals they had now personally set to strive for. It was a great testament to hear the youth describe their transformation into global 4-H citizens.

Indiana Council on World Affairs tests knowledge of Indiana high school youth

On February 26th a team of four Indiana 4-Her’s will be put to the test. As Indiana 4-H Global Programs alumni, they will get an opportunity to apply the knowledge and skills they’ve learned from traveling overseas to Poland and Japan. These youth will compete in the Indiana Council on World Affairs global issues competition. The contest engages high school students from around the state annually to test their knowledge of global affairs. This year the location of the event will be at Marion College. Participating Indiana 4-Her’s on the team yield from Benton, Dearborn, Marion, and Whitley Counties.

Poland and Japan Programs (2011)

The Poland program will host 28 Polish 4-Her’s and leaders in Indiana this summer from June 1 to June 17th. 22 of the visitors, from the Swietokrzyskie Voivodship, will stay with northern Indiana host families. Six of the visitors, from the Opole Voivodship, will stay in a new expanded area for the program in southern Indiana (Extension Area 2). The Japan program will host 18 youth and 4 adults from Tokyo, Japan in Indiana this summer from July 24-August 14th. These Japanese visitors will stay in Indiana 4-H families from across the state. Please consider hosting, or encouraging a family that would be a good host. Applications to host are due on April 15th. But to assure your personal choice of match, we encourage you to apply in February and March. Indiana 4-H families who participated in 2010 reminded us that they observed their youth grow in accepting differences, critical thinking about the world, communication skills, and social skills.
Purdue Extension is a service tailored to meet the needs of Indiana, needs we know firsthand. Our educators, specialists, and volunteers live and work in all 92 Indiana counties. We provide the link between Land Grant research and Indiana residents. In doing that we provide practical solutions to local issues. We provide information and expertise that’s available in the form you want, when you want it. That's Purdue Extension, Indiana’s home team advantage.

International Programs in Agriculture (IPIA) at Purdue University promotes and facilitates international activities in the College of Agriculture through collaboration with educational institutions, agencies and organizations throughout the world. These educational partnerships are designed to help improve agriculture, natural resources, and food systems locally, regionally and around the world, as well as enrich communities at Purdue, Indiana and beyond.

The objective of the new Modernizing Extension and Advisory Services (MEAS) project is to define and disseminate good practice strategies and approaches to establishing efficient, effective and financially sustainable rural extension and advisory service systems in selected countries.

Extension systems in Africa, Asia, the Middle East, Eastern Europe, and Central America need to undergo significant change if they are to effectively serve the food security and economic development needs of resource-poor men and women farmers.

New approaches must draw on full breadth of resources in public, private and civil society organizations and utilized available advanced information and communications technologies. MEAS is a Center of Excellence that seeks to promote and support such endeavors.

The goal is to help transform and modernize these extension systems, so they can play a key role in both increasing farm incomes and enhancing the livelihoods of the rural poor, especially farm women.

http://www.meas-extension.org/ (2/4/11)

More info can be found on the website.